

*Some Further Notes on Kálidása.*—By GEORGE A. GRIERSON, Esq., B. C. S.

In the April number of the Indian Antiquary for 1878, there is an interesting account of the traditions concerning Kálidása current in Mysore.

The tradition in Mithilá, where I am at present, is somewhat different, and it may not be out of place to mention what I have gathered concerning Kálidása in Bihár.

It will be observed that the two legends coincide in describing Kálidása as being ignorant in his youth, and as acquiring his unrivalled power over the Sanskrit language by the special interposition of a deity.

According to local tradition Kálidása was born at Dámodarpur, a village near the town of Uchait, and situated within the confines of the Madhubani sub-division of the Darbhanga or Eastern Tirhút district.

As narrated in the article above referred to, he was left an orphan at an early age, and being destitute of means of support, he was, although a Bráhmaṇ, obliged to allow himself to be brought up amongst some low caste tribes, who tended cattle. He grew up so stupid, that even amongst his fellows he was considered little better than an idiot.

Now, there was once on a time a Bráhmaṇ, who lived in a certain city, who had a daughter (name unknown), who was the most learned woman of her age. She refused many advantageous offers of marriage, averring that she would only wed a man more learned than herself. At length her father, losing all patience, made a secret vow that he would marry her to the stupidest Bráhmaṇ he could find. So he went about searching for such a man; but could not find one, for ignorant Bráhmaṇs are rare in Mithilá.\* At length one day, he was passing through Dámodarpur, when he saw a boy, dressed as a *gowálá*, sitting on the branch of a tree, and cutting the branch at a part between himself and the trunk. The Bráhmaṇ looked, and the boy cut on and at last, when he had cut through the branch, fell to the ground along with it. The boy got up, much hurt, and expressed wonder at the result of his labour. The Bráhmaṇ thought that if this boy were only of his caste, he would be just the husband for his daughter. He made enquiries and found that his name was Kálidása, and that he *was* a Bráhmaṇ, who, being left destitute, was supported by the charity of the Gowálás of Dámodarpur. After inquiring as to his stupidity, and finding the result of his inquiries satisfactory, the Bráhmaṇ took Kálidása to his home

\* So says the legend. I only wish that, at the present day, there was some truth in the statement. The difficulty now is to find a Bráhmaṇ, who can do anything but fight and bring false cases. *Experto crede*; Tirhútiyá Bráhmaṇs are the bane of a sub-divisional officer's life.

and introduced him to his daughter, as her future husband. The daughter, in order to test Kálidása's knowledge, asked him if he was learned in Sanskrit. Kálidása in his ignorance replied "ज्ञानो नास्ति मेव," meaning, of course, "ज्ञानं नास्ति." The daughter was highly offended at this ignorant answer and told her parent that he ought to have known better than to bring forward such a dolt as her future husband. But her father was not in the least taken aback and replied that, by saying as she had just said, she had shown her inferiority to Kálidása in Sanskrit learning, in that she was not able to understand the excellence of the idiom with which he spoke,—“For,” said he, “‘ज्ञा’ means ‘knowledge,’ ‘नो’ means ‘of us,’ *i. e.*, ‘of me,’ ‘नास्ति’ means ‘there is not’; ‘मेव’ is compounded of ‘मा’ and ‘इव,’ of which ‘मा’ means ‘Lakshmi,’ and ‘इव,’ ‘like.’ The whole phrase ‘ज्ञा नो नास्ति मेव’ therefore means ‘I am not as learned as Lakshmi.’”\* On hearing this explanation, the daughter was compelled to confess herself vanquished and agreed to marry Kálidása. After the performance of the ceremony, Kálidása hastened to meet his bride in the wedding-chamber; but she, being strong-minded, refused to allow any familiarities, until she had catechised him in the soundness of his knowledge of the Śāstras. Of course, poor Kálidása was utterly confounded and so incensed his wife that she gave him a sound drubbing with a broom-stick.

He fled from the chamber and passed the rest of the night wandering about in a neighbouring wood, and crying with the pain of the broom-stick. In the morning he resolved to deserve his wife, by at least learning to read and write at a *páth-s'álá* in Uchait.

He attended the *páth-s'álá* regularly, but in vain. He was a bye-word amongst the pupils and an example of stupidity continually held up to the other boys by the *guru*.

At Uchait, there is a famous Durgásthán situated in the midst of the jangal: and one rainy stormy evening, his school-fellows dared Kálidása to visit it at midnight. Out of his innate stupidity, Kálidása was perfectly indifferent in the matter of ghosts and readily undertook to perform the venturesome action. As it was necessary for him to show some token of his visit, he smeared the palm of his hand with ashes, that he might leave the impress of his hand on the image.

Now, it must be observed, that it is the custom in Mithilá, when any one has committed a grievous sin, for the people to smear his face with ashes and to parade him in this state before the town. Therefore it is a “*yat paro násti*” insult to cast ashes on the face of an innocent man.

\* I fear this story did not originally apply to Kálidása, though I have heard it attributed to him. I have met it in the Purusha Parikshá, but no mention of Kálidása is made in that version.

Kálidása arrived at the Durgásthán at midnight, as agreed upon, and prepared to leave the ashy impress of his hand on the face of the image of Durgá. No one but a fool would have dared to do this,—but then Kálidása was a fool indeed. As he lifted his hand, the awful consequences of the action became evident to Durgá, who foresaw that in the morning her own image would become the laughing-stock of all the country round; she therefore appeared before him in her proper form. Nothing deterred by this, Kálidása was reaching out his hand towards the face of the image in spite of her entreaties, when to save her reputation she promised him any boon he might ask for, on condition of his abstaining. He consented and asked to be the wisest man in the world. She granted the boon, promising that he should know the contents of every page which he should turn over during that night, and that he should always be victorious in any public disputation in which he might engage. Kálidása thereupon hurried home and spent the rest of the night in continually turning over all the leaves of all the books in his guru's library. At daybreak he retired to rest, and while he was yet asleep the pupils arrived and sat at the feet of the guru for their daily instruction. No one took any notice of Kálidása, as he remained asleep in the room, till the guru, while instructing, made a slip in his Sanskrit. Without awaking, Kálidása instantly corrected it; and then all, being astonished at this precocity on the part of the fool of the Academy, joined in waking him and in demanding the authority for the correction. Kálidása, on the spot, quoted the necessary sutra of Páṇini, a work which, till then, he had never read. The astonishment of all can be imagined, and it was not diminished when he described the miracle which was the source of his knowledge.

There is a story about Kálidása current here, which is not unamusing. It runs as follows. There was a king called S'ibáy Síñh, the father of Rúp-náráyaṇ, who was renowned for his patronage of learned men. As he knew nothing himself, he invented a very simple way of judging the capabilities of the crowds attracted to his court,—he valued paṇḍits not by their learning, but by their weight. The fatter and more unwieldy a Bráhmaṇ was, the more he was honoured, and the greater the rewards given him for his learning. Before Kálidása had made his name, he determined to attend at the king's court. His friends dissuaded him, saying, "You will never succeed there, for you are small and lean," but nevertheless he started, repeating the following verse—

दसु यच्छति वा न वा नरेभ्यो यदि कर्षे कविभारतीं शृणोति ।

रति यच्छति वा न वा नवोढा यदि केलीगृहदेहलीमुपैति ॥

That is to say, "Whether a king presents gifts or not, when he hears a poet's voice (he will certainly give); just as, whether a bride will admit a

man to her embraces or not, (she will certainly yield) once she has set her foot upon the threshold of the room dedicated to amorous sport." On the way he picked up a man of the Bheriyár or shepherd caste, who was the fattest man ever known. Kálidása persuaded him to accompany him and to pretend that he was the master, and Kálidása only the pupil. He further instructed the shepherd on no account to let his voice be heard, promising to do all the talking himself. The shepherd agreed to this, and the two journeyed to king Sibáy Síñh's court. Kálidásá introduced the shepherd as his master, and the weight of the latter immediately told. He was rapidly promoted and soon became the chief paṇḍit in the court. All this time he never opened his lips, Kálidása officiating on all occasions as his mouth-piece; and probably the fact of his silence increased his fame, for the legend (unconsciously foretelling the story of Jack and his Parrot) says, that the king considered that as he did not speak, he must think a lot.

One day, however, the Bheriyár forgot his instructions, and in a full Sabhá, in the presence of the king, while the conversation was about the Rámáyana, he opened his lips, and pronounced the word रामण when he should have said रावण.\* The whole assembly was electrified at this one word of the Silent Paṇḍit. The king to do him justice saw the mistake, but still it did not shake his faith in the weight of its utterer. So he propounded the following question to the assembly—"I have always heard other paṇḍits pronounce the word as रावण; and I have seen the Rámáyana, and in it the word is always spelt रावण. How then does it happen that this paṇḍit, who is the greatest paṇḍit at my court, pronounces व as भ, and says रामण? Thereupon Kálidása stood up, and on the spur of the moment repeated the following *s'loka* :

कुम्भकर्णे भकारोऽस्ति भकारोऽस्ति विभीषणे ।

राक्षसानां कुलश्रेष्ठे रामणे न तु रावणे ॥

"Kumbhakarna (was a Rákshasa, and) his name contains the letter "bh," so does the name of Vibhíshana. Ráv(bh)ana was the chief of the Rákshasas, and therefore his name should be Rábhana, and not Rávaṇa." This very lame excuse appears to have filled the *sabhá* with admiration for Kálidása's wisdom, and thenceforth his name became famous throughout the three worlds.

At King Bhoja's court, the paṇḍit who had the ear of the king was

\* This is evidently an allusion to the local pronunciation of the lower orders. In my notes on the Rangpur Dialect, published in the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society for 1877, I have shown that similar changes to this exist in at least one provincial dialect of Bengal.

one named "Dallan Kavi" (दल्लन् कवि).<sup>\*</sup> This man was neither very clever nor very ignorant, but was only moderately learned (मध्यम पण्डित). By dint, however, of intrigues he had attained to such promotion, that no paṇḍit could approach the king, until he had been examined and passed by Dallan Kavi. Dallan naturally abused this power and introduced only the most ignorant paṇḍits to the king, sending all who were more learned than himself away, *re ineffectá.*

Kálidása wished to be introduced to King Bhoja : but, noticing that all the good paṇḍits returned home disappointed, while the bad ones were received into favour, he suspected the true nature of the case, and had recourse to the following artifice :—

He set out for Dhára, where King Bhoja reigned, and on the way he met three poor ignorant pædagogues, who were bent on the same errand as himself. These three had put their heads together to concoct some verses which they might recite before the king, but their united efforts only brought them as far as the first half of a single anushtubh, which was as follows :—

अस्थिवद्धकवचैव पुनः सञ्चासिदन्वत् ।

This being interpreted means "Like a bone, like a crane, and again like a mendicant's tooth,"† but they could get no farther. When they saw Kálidása, they asked for his assistance, and he replied by giving the second half of the śloka impromptu, as follows,—

राजत भोज ते कीर्तिः शरच्चन्द्रमरीचिवत् ॥

the whole śloka then meaning. "(Bright) as ivory, or as the (snowy) crane, as the teeth of a mendicant, or as the rays of the autumn moon, is thy glory, O King Bhoja," which incongruous display of metaphor immensely pleased the three poor paṇḍits. Kálidása then went on his way to Dhára, and dressing himself in very mean attire called to pay his respects to Dallan Kavi. He took care, however, to call when Dallan was not at home ; and repeated this every day for a week, during which time he made himself thoroughly acquainted with all the habits, customs and hours of his future patron.

After the expiration of the week Kálidása went again to Dallan's house in mean attire, at a time when he was engaged in a ceremony usually performed apart from the multitude.‡ In spite of this, however, Kálidása

\* So his name is pronounced and spelt now-a-days ; a reference, however, to the S'árdúla vikrīḍita verse later on will show that it was originally *Dalana* (दलन).

† A *Sannyási* is not supposed to chew betel-nut and *pán*. Hence his teeth are not discoloured, but retain their pristine whiteness.

‡ तत्त्वमथे दल्लनकविवाह्यभूमिं गतः ॥

forced himself into his presence and made a most profound obeisance. Indignant at the interruption, Dallan ordered him to leave the place, but Kálidása pacified him by a string of far-fetched compliments, and he at length condescended to ask the new-comer his business. Kálidása replied that he was a poor poet from the south, who did not know the manners and customs of Dhára, and that he wished to be introduced to king Bhoja. Dallan asked if he had ever composed anything in Sanskrit. Kálidása replied, "a little," and that he was prepared to give an example there and then. It was as follows :—

इत्यपि डुकरति नगर वने  
 पुंसिवा घसि घसि लागु थकने ।  
 तथा कहत ह्यम जिव कस ने  
 स्युः विनु जिव मोर कर हनहने ॥

This remarkable composition Kálidása translated as meaning. "The cuckoo sings in the city and in the forest, and a woman keeps pounding sandal wood, and says I cannot bear my life. Separated from my beloved one, my heart goes pit-a-pat."

To understand this ludicrous mixture of pedantic and ignorant mistakes some explanation is necessary. The following verse occurs in the *Amarakosha*, "वनप्रियः परभृतः कोकिलः पिक इत्यपि," "the cuckoo is also (इत्यपि) called *pika* and other names." Kálidása, however, represents himself as thinking that the meaning is that *kokila*, *pika* and *ityapi* are all synonymous terms. In डुकरति there are three mistakes. Kálidása meant to say करोति, mistranslating it as "sings." The verb कृ "to make" is marked in the *Dhátupáthas* as "डुकृञ्," in which डु and ञ् are *anubandhas* or indicatory letters, which form no part of the root and only draw attention to certain peculiarities of conjugation. Kálidása, however, represents himself as thinking that only ञ् is an *anubandha*, and that "डुकृ" is a ready made root of the first class meaning "to sing." With regard to पुंसिवा, the following verse occurs in the *Amarakosha* :

पञ्चैते देवतरवो मन्दारः पारिजातकः ।  
 सन्तानः कल्पवृक्षश्च पुंसिवा हरिचन्दनं ॥

That is to say, "Of the following five names of celestial trees, the *mandára*, the *parijátaka*, the *santána*, and the *kalpavriksha* are masculine, while the *harichandana* is optionally neuter." Kálidása, however, took "puñsi vá" as being a synonym for "harichandana" or "yellow sandalwood." The words "घसि घसि लागु थकने" are Hindí. With regard to तथा, the "वनिता सहिला तथा" of the *Amarakosha* led Kálidása to represent him-

self as saying that “तया” meant “a woman.” The words “कहत हस जिव कस ने” are again Hindī. From “स्युः पुसांसः पञ्चजनाः पूरुषाः पुरुषा नरः” of the *Amarakosha*, Kālidāsa makes out that “स्युः” means “a beloved one.” The rest of the verse is Hindī.

Dallan, after hearing this elaborately explained to him, came to the conclusion, as he well might, that Kālidāsa was a very poor paṇḍit indeed, and that it would be quite safe to introduce him to king Bhoja. He therefore applauded the composition, and requested him to leave him, promising to introduce him after he had concluded performing the office at which he had been interrupted.

They accordingly started off to the palace, and on the way Dallan asked Kālidāsa, if he had composed any verse to recite before the king. Kālidāsa said he had one, and repeated the verse which he and the three poor Brāhmaṇs had concocted between them. Poor as this was, it was far better than anything that Dallan could write, and his jealousy was not appeased until Kālidāsa had assured him that it was not his own, but that he had got some one else to make it for him. It was then written down on a slip of paper, and they proceeded into the audience chamber. After the usual *ś'śrāvāda* the following conversation took place :

*Dallan* राजन् अभ्युदयोऽस्तु

*King*

दलनकवे ।

किं पत्रिकायाम्

*Dallan*

इदं ॥

काव्यं

*King*

कस्य कवेर्

*Dallan*

अमुष्य कृतिनम् ।

*King*

तत्पथतां

*Kālidāsa*

पथते ॥

किन्त्वासःसरविन्दसुन्दरदृशां ।

द्राक् चामरान्दोलनाद् ॥

उद्वेलद्गुजवलिक्कङ्कणभ्रणत्= ।

कारः क्षणं वार्थतां ॥

That is to say, the king and Dalana were only talking prose, but Kālidāsa ingeniously turned the whole conversation into four complicated *S'śrāvāvikrīḍita* verses. The king was surrounded by a bevy of damsels, and Kālidāsa expresses himself unable to read his verse, being distracted by their charms. The translation is as follows :—

*Dallan.* O king, may you prosper.

*King.* Dallan Kavi, what have you in that paper ?

*Dallan.* This is a poetical composition.

*King.* Of what poet ?

*Dallan.* Of this ingenious gentleman here.

*King.* Let it be read.

*Kálidása.* I proceed to read. But first, let the wanton tinkling of the bracelets on the slender arms of these damsels, beautiful-eyed as lotuses, as they wave their *chauñris* round thee, be stopped for an instant.

By this display of learning Dallan was obliged to confess himself conquered, and ever after *Kálidása* retained the post of honour near king Bhoja.

At King *Bhoja's* court, there were three pañdits whose names are now unknown, but who are called collectively the three *S'rutidharas*.\* Now, one of these three was such that he could repeat a composition when it was repeated before him once, another could do the same when it was repeated twice, while the third could do so when he had heard it thrice. In order to attract poets to his court, King Bhoja offered a prize of a *lákḥ* of rupees to any one who could compose an original piece of poetry. Numbers of poets became candidates for the prize, and recited their original compositions in the presence of the king and the three *S'rutidharas* : but always with the same result. *S'rutidhara* No. 1 exclaimed that the composition was an old one, that he had heard it before, and backed his opinion by repeating it, which he could, of course, do, as he had heard it once. Then No. 2, who by this time had heard it twice, also averred that it was an old one, and also repeated it, and the same course was followed by No. 3, who by this time had heard it thrice. In this way all the poets were driven with shame from the palace. *Kálidása*, however, was not to be beaten, and going before the king as a competitor recited the following *sragdhará* verses.

राजन् भो भोजराज ।

त्रिभुवनविदितो ।

धार्मिकस्य पिताभूत् ॥

\* A similar trio is met in the *Kathá Sarit Ságara*, (Introduction—story of *Vararuchi*). They lived, however, at *Pátaliputra*, being patronized by king *Nanda*. The three were named *Vararuchi*, *Vyáḍi*, and *Indradatta*. The story tells how there was a *bráhmaṇ* named *Varsha*, who was an idiot. *Kártikeya*, however, had granted him as a boon, that he should be endowed with every science, with this proviso, that he could only communicate his learning to a *bráhmaṇ* who should be able to acquire it all at one hearing. *Vararuchi* was such a person, and *Varsha* communicated his lore to him in presence of the other two. *Vararuchi* thereupon repeated it to *Vyáḍi*, who was able to remember a thing on hearing it twice repeated,—and *Vyáḍi* again repeated it to *Indradatta*, who thus heard it three times, and was then himself able to repeat it.



पित्रा ते या गृहीता ।  
 नवनवतिमिता ।  
 रत्नकोटिर्मदीया ॥  
 तास्त्वं देहि लदीयेः ।  
 सकलवुधजनैर् ।  
 ज्ञायते वृत्तिरेषा ॥  
 नो चेद्भिय्या वचो मे ।  
 नवसुकृतिरियं ।  
 देहि लक्षं ततो मे ॥

That is to say,—“Hail, King Bhoja, thy father was famed throughout the three worlds as a virtuous man. The ninety-nine *krors* of jewels belonging to me, which thy father took from me, do thou now restore unto me. All the wise men who stand in attendance on thee know this to be the fact,—or else,—if my words are false,—this poem of mine is an original composition, and thou must pay to me the proffered prize of a lākḥ of rupees.” The three *S'rutidharas* dared not say that they had heard this before, for that would be tantamount to confessing that Bhoja owed Kālidāsa ninety-nine *krors* of jewels.\*

Before Kālidāsa became wise, but after his marriage, his wife used to try and teach him a little learning. One day she tried to teach him to pronounce the word “उष्ट्र” “a camel” (*ushtra*). But Kālidāsa could not form his mouth so as to pronounce the word, and at one time would he would say “उर्” (*ur*) and at another time उष् (*ush*). His wife at length lost her patience, and after saying—

उष्ट्रे लुम्पति रं वा षं वा ।  
 तस्मै दत्ता विपुलनितम्बा ॥  
 किं न करोति स एव हि रुष्टः ।  
 किं न करोति स एव हि तुष्टः ॥

“He mispronounces *ushtra* with *ra*, and *sha*; and yet God has given him a round-limbed wife. What can He not do when he is angered, and what can He not do when he is pleased,”† she launched forth into words of no measured abuse. When Kālidāsa remonstrated with her on the foul-

\* I have met a story somewhat similar to this in Persian literature, and much regret that I cannot lay my hands on it now. A comic version of the Persian tale can be found in PUNCH, Vol. II, January to June 1842, p. 254. It is called “Jawbrahim Heraudee.”

† *i. e.* He must be angry with me, inasmuch as he has given me a dolt for a husband, and he must be pleased with Kālidāsa, for he has given him me for a wife.

ness of her language, she replied “नष्टस्य कान्या गतिः” “What else is fit for one so utterly debased?” These words dwelt in Kálidása’s mind and rankled there. After the miraculous gift of learning was given to him by Durgá, as previously described, before returning home, he disguised himself as a *Vairági* and, taking a dish of flesh food, sat himself on the edge of the tank where his wife usually bathed, and commenced to eat. His wife presently came up, and the following conversation ensued,—in the *Sárdúla-vikrídita* metre.

<i>The wife.</i>	भिक्षो मांसनिषेवणं प्रकुरुषे ।
<i>Kálidása.</i>	किं तेन मद्यं विना ॥
<i>W.</i>	मद्यं चापि तव प्रियं
<i>Ká.</i>	प्रियमद्यो ।
	वाराङ्गनाभिः रुद्ध ॥
<i>W.</i>	वेश्या द्रव्यहृत्तिः कुतस्त्व धनं ।
<i>Ká.</i>	दूतेन चौर्येण वा ॥
<i>W.</i>	द्यूताचौर्यपरिग्रहो ऽपि भवता ।
<i>Ká.</i>	“नष्टस्य कान्या गतिः” ॥

That is :—

*Wife.* Oh mendicant, are you eating flesh ?

*Kálidása.* What is that without wine ?

*W.* Do you also like wine ?

*Ká.* Indeed I do, and women with it.

*W.* But courtezans expect money. Whence can you pay them ?

*Ká.* From gambling and stealing.

*W.* So, Sir, you also gamble and are a thief ?

*Ká.* “What else is fit for one so utterly debased ?”

When the wife heard her own words thus hurled back in her teeth, she was ashamed and recognized her husband and, taking him home, ever afterwards lived in due subordination to him.

There was a *pis'ácha* or demon who inhabited a wood in Dhára, through which ran a much-frequented road. It was his custom to seize passers-by and to propose to them a question in the words “कोरक्, कोरक्, कोरक्” “*koruk, koruk, koruk.*” As no one could understand this, the traveller was invariably seized and eaten by the demon, his worldly possessions being added to a pile of those which had been the property of previous victims. One day Kálidása had occasion to go along the road, and as usual, the *pis'ácha* seized him and asked the hard question. Kálidása understood it to be कोरक्, कोरक्, कोरक्, that is to say, “who is free from disease ?” repeated thrice. He thereupon replied as follows :

वर्षासु न गच्छति भरदि न भक्षति ।  
 हेमन्तशिशिरयोरग्नि च ।  
 गच्छति मधुमाधवयोर्धीश्वे स्वपिति च  
 सो ऽरुक् सो ऽरुक् सो ऽरुक् ॥

“ He who stays at home in the rainy season, eats little in the autumn, eats his fill in the cold and dewy season, goes abroad in the months of spring, and sleeps in the hot season, is free from disease.” The *pis'ucha* was much pleased at Kálidása's reply and released him, giving him all the wealth which he had levied from his former victims.

One cool spring evening when the south wind was blowing softly, and the mango blossoms were nodding on the trees, king Bhoja was walking in his garden, accompanied by Kálidása and Bhavabhúti. The king, charmed by the graceful motion of the mango blossoms, asked Kálidása to tell him why they waved so prettily. Kálidása replied :—

इयं सन्ध्या दूराद्दक्षमुपगता हन्त मलयात् ।  
 तदेकां लङ्गे हे तरुणवति नेष्यामि रजनीं ॥  
 समीरेणेत्युक्त्वा नवकुसुमिता चूतलतिका ।  
 धुनाना मूर्धानं नहि नहि नहीत्येव कुरुते ॥

“ ‘ It is evening, and, lo, I have come from Malaya afar ; I would pass one night in thy house, O graceful one.’ When the newly blossomed mango tendril is thus addressed by the wind, she shakes her head, and says ‘Nay, nay, nay.’ ”

The king was pleased at this poetical description, but asked Kálidása, why the mango said “nay” three times. The latter dared not plead exigencies of metre, and being unable to give a plausible excuse, hung his head ashamed. The king then turned to Bhavabhúti, and asked him the same question. Kálidása's famous rival, giving a different meaning to *नवकुसुमिता*, which also means a woman who is not “*चतुस्त्राता*”, explained that the three-fold repetition referred to the three days of uncleanness which precede the purificatory bathing : as stated thus in the *Suddhi viveka*.

प्रथमे ह्येनि चाण्डाली द्वितीये चर्मकारिणी ।  
 तृतीये रजकी प्रोक्ता चतुर्थे स्नानमाचरेत् ॥

“ If a woman admit her husband on the first day, she sinks to the level of a *chāṇḍālī*, if on the second day, to that of a leather-worker, and if on the third day, to that of a *dhobinī* ; but on the fourth day she may bathe and admit him.”

There was a famous courtesan at *Dhāra*, who loved Kálidása and was beloved by him in return. She also admitted king Bhoja to her favours.

The latter, however, she only allowed to approach her in pursuit of her calling, while Kālidāsa was admitted for pure love. For what will a woman not do for love? Does not the poet Vidyākara Mīśra say as follows.\*

बन्धनानि च भवन्ति बहूनि  
 प्रेमरञ्जकतबन्धनसन्धत् ।  
 दारुभेदनिपुणो ऽपि षडङ्घ्रिः  
 निष्क्रियो भवति पङ्कजवदः ॥

“Lo, there are many bonds, but none like the binding of the toils of love. Even the bee, skilled as he is in cleaving timber, lies helpless,—bound in the hollow of a lotus.”

And again does not the poetess Lakhimā Thakurāin say :—

प्रेमैव सासु यदि चेत्यधिकेन नैव  
 तेनापि चेद् गुणवता न समं कदापि ।  
 तेनापि चेद् भवति सासु कदापि भङ्गा  
 भङ्गो ऽपि चेद् भवतु वश्यमवश्यमायुः ॥  
 किं भूषणैर्यदि न दैवममङ्गनायास् ।  
 तेनापि किं यदि न रूपमपूर्वकञ्च ॥  
 रूपेण किं यदि न तत्र गुणा वसन्ति ।  
 किं वा गुणैर्गुणवता यदि नानुबन्धः ॥ २ ॥  
 ॥ तथा च ॥  
 मनोभूमौ जाता प्रकृतिचपलायां विधिवशात्  
 सखे सम्यग्बर्धा प्रचुरगुणपुष्पप्रसविनी ॥  
 तथा संसेक्त्या स्मरणसलिलेनानुदिवसं ।  
 यथा नेयं स्नानं व्रजति नृदुलस्त्रेहलतिका ॥ ३ ॥  
 ॥ अपरञ्च ॥  
 आरभ्य गुर्वी क्षयिणी क्रमेण ।  
 लब्धी पुरा वृद्धिसती च पश्चात् ॥  
 दिनस्य पूर्वार्द्धपरार्द्धभिन्ना ।  
 ह्यायेव मैत्री खलसज्जनानां ॥ ४ ॥

(1.) “Ah! may I never love, but if I must,—let it not be with a wanderer; and if it be with such, may he not be full of excellence: and even if it be thus, may my love be never broken; and if it be broken, may my life, which is not mine, be mine to cast away.

\* The following verses are generally quoted by paṇḍits when telling this story. As I have not noticed them in any of the usual Chrestomathies, I give them here.

(2.) “What are adornments, if a woman hath not youth; and what is youth, if she hath not perfect comeliness; and what is that, if virtue doth not dwell within; and what is virtue, if her beloved one doth not possess it too?”

(3.) “My friend, a tender plant hath been planted by fate in the treacherous soil of thy heart. Cherish it jealously, for it beareth many flowers. Sprinkle it daily with the water of remembrance that it may not fade,—for that plant is love.

(4.) “Like the shadows of the fore and of the afternoon are the loves of the wicked and of the good. The first beginneth great and gradually fadeth away; but the second is delicate at first, and afterwards waxeth mighty.”

One evening Kálidása was with his mistress, when they were interrupted by the sudden arrival of the king. Kálidása having no time to escape was obliged to hide himself under the bed, she cautioning him, as he valued his life, not to let his presence be known by either word or action. The king after his arrival, fancying himself alone with the courtesan, and wishing to pay a compliment to her beauty, laid his hand upon her bosom and addressed her as follows :

तव तन्नि कुचावेतौ नियतौ चक्रवर्तिनौ ।

Having got thus far, and having accomplished half a verse, he tried to finish it, but could not, and hemming and hawing, stuck there. Kálidása, who would rather have died than have heard an incomplete verse, could no longer contain himself; and his poetic fury overpowering him, he burst from under the bed, upsetting it and its occupants, crying out—

आसमुद्रकरयाही भवान् यत्र करप्रदः ॥

The whole couplet, containing a pun on the word कर, which means both “tax” and “hand,” meaning—

*King.* “Verily, my fair one, thy breasts are like two monarchs of the world.”

*Kálidása.* “Yes—for doth not His Majesty, who levieth tribute from sea to sea,\* lay his hand upon them.”†

The king, in consideration of the neatness of the reply, forgave Kálidása’s indiscretion.

The following verses show how poetically Kálidása used to do his marketing.

He went up to a *pán* seller and said :—

\* A चक्र, is a tract of country running from sea to sea.

† Which may also be translated “pay tribute (कर) unto them.”

पर्णानि स्वर्णवर्णानि रमण्य् आकर्णलोचने ।

चूर्णमानीयतां तूर्णं पूर्णचन्द्रनिभानने ॥

“Give me golden-coloured *pán*, O fair one with the winsome eyes; and give me lime, O thou whose face is fair as the full fair moon,—and be quick about it.”

Now it happened that the *pán*-seller was no other than *Deví* in disguise: and she, not understanding the tone of compliment which was followed so unceremoniously by a peremptory order, took it into her head that *Kálidása* was mocking her, and, being a woman, took offence and ignored his request. But *Kálidása*, nothing daunted, went on,—

विना खदिरसारेण क्षारेण क्षरिणीदृश्यां ।

जायते नाधरे रागो नानुरागः पयोधरे ॥

“(and give me also) betel spice, for without it the lip of my fawn-eyed love will lack its lustre; e’en as her bosom doth when shorn of its neck-lace.”

Whereupon *Deví*, charmed with the sweetness of his language, appeared in proper form and gave him her blessing.

I have already quoted one uncomplimentary expression of opinion made use of by *Kálidása*’s wife, with regard to her husband. Another runs as follows :—

वरं दरिद्रः मुनिशास्त्रपारगो

न चापि सूखी दशकोटिनायकः ।

सुलोचना जीर्णपटैर्विराजिता

न नेत्रहीना कनकैरलङ्किता ॥

“Even a beggar, who knoweth the whole law and the prophets, is better than a ruler of millions who is a fool. A fair-eyed damsel shineth even in tattered weeds,—not so one who is blind, even though she is adorned with gold.”

In the days of his wisdom *Kálidása* often took occasion to playfully chide his wife for her former unkindness; as in the verses connected with the following story.

The husband and wife were taking a morning walk by the side of a tank covered with lotuses. The sun was rising, and the bells of the lotuses were in agitation, although there was no visible cause for their being so. The wife accordingly asked :—

अनिलस्यागमो नासि द्विपदे नैव दृश्यते ।

वारिमध्ये स्थितं पद्मं कम्पते केन चेतुना ॥ १ ॥

*Kálidása* replied—

पावकाच्छिष्टवर्णानां शर्वरीकृतबन्धनात् ।  
सूर्यमुदिच्छतां कान्ते कम्पते तेन हेतुना ॥ २ ॥

She again asked—

काष्ठस्य भेदने शक्तिस्तथा वंशगणस्य च ।  
अत्यन्तकोमलं पद्मं न भिन्नं केन हेतुना ॥ २ ॥

And he again replied—

पद्मेन बन्धनं प्रीत्या धमरः प्रेमरत्नकः ।  
तस्मान्न भिद्यते कान्ते भवता सदृशं न हि ॥ ४ ॥

*She.* (1) “There is no current of air, nor can I observe the approach of any elephant. Why, then, is the water-lotus agitated?”

*He.* (2) “The coal black bees have been clasped within its bells all night, and now they wish to see the sun. Therefore, my love, is the lotus agitated.

*She.* (3) “But bees and their kin can pierce the hardest wood, and the lotus bell is exquisitely tender. Why, then, does not the bee tear it forcibly open?”

*He.* (4) “The lotus clasps him in her bell in love, and the bee returns her love. Therefore he does not tear the bell asunder,—for, my Love, he is not like thee.”

The following verses in praise of contentment are universally attributed to Kālidāsa in this part of the country. They are excellent specimens of their style, and are worth recording here.

निःस्त्रो वष्टि शतं शती दशशतं लक्षं सहस्राधिपे ।  
लक्षेशो द्वितिपालनं क्षितिपतिश्चक्रेश्वरलं पुनः ॥ १ ॥  
चक्रेशः सुरराजतां सुरपतिर्ब्रह्मा पदं वाञ्छति ।  
ब्रह्मा शम्भुपदं शिवो हरिपदं दृष्ट्वावधिं को गतः ॥ २ ॥  
भ्रान्तं देशमनेकदुर्गविषमं प्राप्तं न किञ्चित् फलं ।  
तज्ज्ञा जातिकुलाभिमानमखिलं सेवा कृता निष्फला ॥ ३ ॥  
भुक्तं मानविवर्जितं परगृहे साशङ्कया काकवत् ।  
दृष्ट्ये दुर्मतिपापकर्मनिरते नाद्यापि सन्तुष्यसि ॥ ४ ॥  
गन्वाद्यां नवमञ्जिकां मधुकरस्थज्जा गतो यूथिकां ।  
दैवातां च दिद्वाय चम्यकवनं पश्चात् सरोजं गतः ॥ ५ ॥  
ददस्वच निशकरेण विधिना क्रन्दत्यसौ मूढधीः ।  
रुन्तोषेण दिना पराभवपदं प्राप्नोति मूढो जनः ॥ ६ ॥

॥ तेन च ॥

कन्दैः फलैर्मुनिवराः क्षपयन्ति कालं ।

शुष्कैस्त्रुणैर्वनगजा बलिनी भवन्ति ॥

सर्पाः पिबन्ति पवनं न च दुर्बलास्ते ।

सन्तोष एव पुरुषस्य परं धनं स्यात् ॥ ७ ॥

(1.) "He who has nothing wishes to have a hundred; and he who owns a hundred, desires a thousand, while the lord of a thousand wishes for ten thousand. The possessor of ten thousand would be a king, while the king desires to be an emperor.

(2.) "An emperor wishes to rule the gods like Indra, while Indra aspires to the power of Brahman. Brahman himself wishes to obtain the throne of Śiva, and even Śiva, that of Vishṇu.\* What being has ever reached the limit of desire?

(3.) "You have wandered over far and rugged countries, but you obtained no fruit: you abandoned your caste, and all your pride of birth, but your servitude was fruitless.

(4.) "You laid aside your pride, and ate like a crow,—fearfully, in another's house,—and yet you are not satisfied. To-day even your thirst dwells in vile and wicked actions.

(5.) "The bee deserts the fragrant jasmine and seeks the amaranth. Perchance he leaves it too, and approaches the *champakā*, and then the lotus.

(6.) "Imprisoned therein by fate and night, the foolish creature weeps. A fool may obtain discomfiture, but never contentment.

(7.) "Saints pass their lives enjoying roots and fruit. Elephants live on dried grass, and are mighty. Snakes quaff the wind, nor are they wanting in strength. Contentment alone should be the most precious wealth of man."

Much of the preceding is trivial, and, of course, none of it can lay claim to any historical value. My aim has been a very humble one, and I shall be happy, if I am thought to have only moderately come up to it. Even in a backward country like Tirhūt, the old class of paṇḍits is fast dying out, and is being supplanted by men with a smattering of English and Urdú, and only a moderate book-knowledge of Sanskrit. The older paṇḍits acknowledge the change with sorrow, and say that even the women who most conserve the purity of the language, are beginning to use *Yāvanī*

\* Vishṇu is appropriately placed last, as being absolutely निर्लेभ "free from desire."



words. Circumstances have thrown me much amongst these men, and I have taken advantage of this, to make an attempt to preserve some of the vast amount of unwritten lore, which is so fast being forgotten.

In this paper I have thrown into shape part of what I have collected concerning Kálidása: and if it meets with favour, and if time and health permit, I may at some future time give similar legendary accounts of other famous heroes and heroines of Mithilá. With regard to the verses sprinkled through the foregoing pages, my reading has been too limited for me to assume that none of them have been printed before. It must suffice that I do not remember meeting any of them in the usual collections of apothegms, and if my memory has betrayed me, I shall be the first to welcome my error being pointed out.

